(ii) Organisation of Seminars etc. abroad in consultation and with cooperation of various industry Associations.

(iii) Establishment of Contact with International companies for inviting investments in appropriate projects.

(iv) Providing institutional mechanism for facilitating speedy implementation of projects.

(v) Reviewing FDI Policy from time to time in Order to make it more and more investor friendly.

Abolition of Zero Duty on Import of Capital Goods

1862. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering a proposal to do away with Zero duty on import of capital goods to provide level playing field to the domestic Industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are aware that a sizeable section of the public and a dominant group of captains of trade and industry have grave misapprehensions with regard to the challenges posed by expected import surge as a result of World Trade Organization Agreement; and

(d) if so, what steps are contemplated in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The facility of import of capital goods without payment of duty is available under Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme and Export Oriented unit/Export Processing Zones schemes. The duty free import of capital goods is also allowed to mega power projects, fertilizer plants etc. The domestic manufacturers supplying capital goods against aforesaid schemes are eligible to the benefit of deemed exports. These benefits include (a)

Special Imprest License for duty free import of inputs required for manufacturing capital goods (b) deemed export drawback (c) refund of Terminal Excise Duty and (d) Special Import license © 6% of the F.O.R. value.

The review of Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme/EOU and EPZ schemes is currently not under consideration.

(c) and (d) The level of protection given to the domestic industry is an autonomous decision of the Government of India as a part of its overall economic policy. Under commitments to the WTO, all agricultural items and about 62% of the industrial tariff lines are bound at various levels. The applied rates of customs duties are, however, by and large below the bound levels committed under WTO. There is thus no cause for any serious apprehensions of a surge in imports.

Improvements in Patent Bill

1863. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Law Commission has suggested many improvements in the Patent (Amendment) Bill vide Hindu, dated the 21st October, 1999;

(b) the summary of the suggested improvements; and

(c) whether Government propose to incorporate these improvements in the bill now before Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (c) The Law Commission, in its 167th Report on the Patents (Amendment) Bill, 1998, suggested amendments in the Patents (Amendment) Bill, 1998. The report of Law Commission was laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on 28th October, 1999. The suggestions of the Law Commission, as relevant to the legislation, were considered. The Patents (Amendment) Bill, 1998 was passed by both Houses of Parliament and it also received the assent of the President on 26th March, 1999.